

## Using an Auger to Clear a Clogged Toilet

Clearing a clogged toilet can be a simple task, depending on what and where the obstruction is. Enzyme-based products can work on slow-flowing drains by digesting built-up paper and organic waste. But don't bother with drain clearing chemicals. They may clear floor, tub and sink drains, but they won't reach the area of a clog in a toilet. And they can etch and damage the porcelain in the toilet bowl. Instead, you can use a plunger, but if that doesn't work, you may have a deep clog which requires an auger.

### 1. PREP

- First, turn off the water supply to prevent overflows. Spread some newspaper or old towels around the base of the toilet to soak up any spills. Gloves and eye protection are also a good idea.

### 2. ABOUT THE AUGER

- A "closet auger" or "plumbing snake" is best for deep clogs. The covered elbow of the guide tube protects the bowl from scratches. The flexible metal cord snakes through the curves of the pipes. And the sharp, coiled tip helps grab onto a clog.

### 3. SET UP THE AUGER

- Pull on the handle until the short, coiled tip of the auger is the only part protruding out of the elbow of the guide tube. Slide it into the drain. The covered elbow protects the finish on the toilet bowl as it rests on the bottom.

### 4. SNAKE THE AUGER DOWN THE DRAIN

- Feed the coil through the guide tube to work it down the drain. You may need to rotate the handle in forward and reverse, or pull back and forth on the coil to get it to snake through the 3 major bends in the drain. Twist the crank to snake through the drain until it catches on the clog.

### 5. CLEAR THE CLOG

- Continue to crank until the auger becomes tight. This action will usually grab the object causing the clog – and the water will start to clear. Don't over-crank the cable or it could bend back on itself and get stuck in the drain. It's better to retract the cable by cranking in reverse. Then try again repeatedly. If none of this works, your problem may be deeper in the main plumbing lines. You'll probably need to call a plumber.

### 6. RETRACT THE CABLE

- Turn the handle in reverse to retract the cable and pull the clog from the drain.

### 7. CLEAN UP

- Disinfect the toilet bowl and auger so you don't spread bacteria.

## HELPFUL TIPS:

- Regularly clean under the rim around the toilet bowl's edge so the jets don't clog with minerals. Allowing the toilet to flush at full power.
- To stop an overflow from happening, turn off the valve to the toilet or open up the toilet tank and push the flapper down.
- If something like a child's toy gets flushed down the drain, remove the toilet and run the auger through from the bottom.

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**NOTE: Always follow manufacturer's recommended safety precautions and instructions for the products you use.**